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CFR REPORT, INFORM CONSULS, CINC/SHAPE FOR POLADS ONLY

E.O. 12065: GDS 2/20/86- {REYNDERS, THOMAS R.}

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**1. {U} INR - CUBA'S FOREIGN POLICY: AFTER AFGHANISTAN
(GDS 2/20/86)**

{C} CUBAN ASPIRATIONS TO THIRD WORLD LEADERSHIP HAVE BEEN DEALT AN UNEXPECTED BLOW BY THE WORLDWIDE REVULSION AGAINST THE SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN, BUT THE DAMAGE PROBABLY IS NOT IRREPARABLE. SIMILARLY, CUBAN RESENTMENT OVER THE IMPACT OF THE SOVIET ACTION AND MOSCOW'S APPARENT FAILURE TO CONSULT HAVANA IS NOT LIKELY TO CAUSE LASTING HARM TO CUBAN-SOVIET RELATIONS. INDEED, THE ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES AND RESULTANT SOCIAL UNREST THAT CUBA IS NOW EXPERIENCING HAVE SERVED TO UNDERSCORE THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF SOVIET ECONOMIC AND MILITARY SUPPORT.

{C} BOTH CASTRO AND THE SOVIETS KNOW THAT CUBA'S NEAR TOTAL DEPENDENCE ON SOVIET OIL--PLUS OTHER SOVIET ASSISTANCE--GIVES MOSCOW A STRANGLEHOLD ON THE CUBAN ECONOMY WHICH THE WEST IS IN NO POSITION TO RELIEVE EVEN IF IT WISHED TO DO SO.

{C} FOR REASONS UNRELATED TO AFGHANISTAN, HAVANA CAN BE EXPECTED TO SEEK NEW TRADE OPPORTUNITIES AND CREDITS IN THE WEST, BUT THESE CAN--AT BEST--ONLY MITIGATE CUBA'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND HELP RELIEVE DOMESTIC SOCIAL TENSIONS. THEY ARE NO SUBSTITUTE FOR THE SUBSIDIES PROVIDED BY THE SOVIETS. SUCH BROADENED CONTACTS WITH THE WEST COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO ALTER CUBA'S BASIC FOREIGN POLICY ORIENTATION OR INDUCE HAVANA TO MODIFY POLICIES--SUCH AS ITS SUPPORT FOR ARMED REVOLUTION ABROAD--WHICH ARE CENTRAL CONCERNS OF THE US.

{C} CASTRO MAY BELIEVE IT NECESSARY NOW TO GIVE AT LEAST THE APPEARANCE OF DISTANCING CUBA FROM THE SOVIET ACTION IN AFGHANISTAN BY SOFT-PEDALING HIS THESIS OF A "NATURAL ALLIANCE" BETWEEN THE "SOCIALIST" CAMP AND THE NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES. CUBA WILL DOUBTLESS CONTINUE TO PROTECT SOVIET INTERESTS IN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM), HOWEVER, BY USING ITS CHAIRMANSHIP TO SCUTTLE ANY ATTEMPTS TO CONDEMN THE ACTION IN AFGHANISTAN. IT WILL PERSIST IN ITS EFFORTS TO SHAPE NAM POSITIONS IN AN EXCLUSIVELY ANTI-US, ANTI-WESTERN MODE.

{C} CUBA WILL TRY TO REBUILD ITS PRESTIGE BY PUSHING ISSUES THAT ENJOY PERENNIAL NAM SUPPORT, EMPHASIZING CASTRO'S SCHEME--ANNOUNCED AT THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY--FOR A DOLS 300 BILLION TRANSFER OF CAPITAL FROM THE WESTERN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO THE LDC'S. CUBA'S EXPERIENCE WOULD SUGGEST THAT IT WILL SUCCESSFULLY WEATHER NAM CRITICISM FOR ITS PRO-SOVIET POSITION ON AFGHANISTAN AND THAT NAM UNHAPPINESS OVER THE CUBAN-SOVIET RELATIONSHIP WILL RETURN TO ITS CUSTOMARY SUB-LIMINAL LEVEL.

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